

**QUESTIONS, RESPONSES, AND CLARIFICATIONS ON
SOLICITATION 52-SPNA-1-00072
Concept Exploration Contract for the
Aerosol Polarimetry Sensor
October 22, 2001**

1. What is the contract type? Specifically, will it be Firm Fixed Price (as described in paragraph L.3), a FFP-Task Order contract (as described in paragraph B.1), or a FFP-Delivery Order contract (as described in paragraph B.2)?

ANSWER: This is a Firm-Fixed-Price completion contract for services. The references to the delivery order vehicle will be deleted by amendment.

2. Who is the requiring activity? Is it the NPOESS IPO or a NOAA/NESDIS IPO, or are they different titles for the same organization?

ANSWER: The requiring activity is NPOESS/IPO. The NOAA/NESDIS is the parent organization.

3. There is a requirement to present meetings to the government as well as both EMD Prime contractors. Shall we assume that all meetings will be in the same place, at the same time, for the presentation? In other words, should the proposing contractors assume a single destination and single presentation for each briefing requirement?

ANSWER: A single destination and single presentation for each briefing should be presumed when proposing the deliverable meetings; however, the Government may choose to hold the first TIM at the Contractors' facilities sometime during the week of December 10-14.

4. What is the acquisition plan for the APS? Specifically, will the government make the awards to the SDRR phase, and the selected EMD Prime contractor make the downselection decision to the final phase? Additionally, what are the APS downselection criteria (to the SDRR phase and the next phase)? Knowledge of these criteria will allow the APS vendors to optimize their proposed systems to favor cost, risk mitigation, or performance excellence.

ANSWER: The acquisition plan strategy has not yet been determined. It will be determined in part by the results of this Concept Exploration. The downselection criteria will be addressed in the SDRR Request for Proposal.

5. Will the EMD Prime contractors be expected to include a budget estimate (or a firm price) for the APS in their downselection proposals? If each EMD Prime Contract competitor puts a different budget estimate into their proposals, to which should the APS vendors weigh best value decisions?

ANSWER: The basis of your cost estimate for the APS development should be derived from the rationality of your design model, and the reasonableness of your costs. However, we appreciate your point about the possible confusion over the prospect of seeing different estimates used by the EMD prime contract competitors. The Government reserves the right to plug the APS budgeted cost number into the EMD RFP as a Government-directed "Non-Proposed Cost" estimate.

6. The NPOESSLIB document index states that the last update was 1998. Are applicable government documents updated? The spacecraft interface is of particular importance.

ANSWER: The documents have been updated since 1998.

7. For the page limited proposal sections defined in RFP Section L.4, are there minimum margin and font size requirements?

ANSWER: Pages should be printed on 8 ½ x 11-inch paper, with type no smaller than 12 point. Figures, tables and charts are not limited to 8 ½ x 11, but must be folded to that size. Documents shall be submitted in hard copy and electronic form, in Microsoft WORD, EXCEL, or PowerPoint. A cover sheet should be provided for each evaluation criterion. The responses should be concise and direct. Any peripheral data on unrelated programs or excess corporate or marketing data is not desired. An original and ten (10) copies of all information is requested. Two electronic copies are also required. Please include information on the proposal title, the lead organization responding, type of business, and contact points for members of the technical and business team(s).

8. CLARIFICATION: The Trade Agreements Act (TAA) applies to this acquisition, FAR 25.403(b) states that the TAA applies to an acquisition of end products that are \$177,000 or more. When the TAA applies, the Buy American Act is waived, and, "... for eligible products, offers of such products (eligible offers) receive equal consideration with domestic offers." Therefore, if a prime contractor is an "eligible offeror" under the TAA definition, FAR 25.601 says that the agency "must not award" contracts to it if the, "*estimated acquisition value [is] less than \$177,000*".